

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence City Hall

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

August 14, 2007

Open Session

Mr. Medeiros called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. Four School Committee Members were present: Robert Faria, Eileen Lovett, David Medeiros, Steven Santos. (Mildred Morris arrived later). Also present: Dr. Jacqueline Forbes, Superintendent of Schools and Andrew Thomas, Esq. A motion was made by Mr. Faria to move to Executive Session in accordance with RI General Laws, Section 42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel, (a) (2) Litigation, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Vote 4-0.

The School Committee returned to Public Session at 7:35PM. A motion was made by Mrs. Lovett to return to open session and to seal the minutes of the Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Mr. Faria and a

Moment of Silence was observed for the miners in Utah.

Record of Previous Meetings – A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to approve the minutes of School Committee Meetings held on May 31, 2007, June 7, 2007, June 12, 2007 and June 21, 2007, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Vote 5-0.

Chair's Report – None

Hearings – None

Reading of Communication – None

Report of Superintendent and Staff

Dr. Forbes related that the budget process this year for all school districts has been faced with uncommon complexities. RI is in the process of implementing a permanent funding formula that will enable school districts to budget accordingly on an annual basis; this will probably take effect in 2009. RI needs a financial system based on student need and taxpayer ability to pay, which depends less on local taxes. For 2007-08 expenditures will exceed revenues; a letter was sent to the Auditor General on July 26, 2007 outlining our fiscal concerns. There are two reasons for the projected deficit: contractual agreements and special education tuitions. A meeting has been scheduled this week with the Auditor General for

suggestions to assist us in getting to a balanced budget. Dr. Forbes advised that she will be presenting the budget to the School Committee in the next couple of days for their review and preparation for discussion at a School Committee on August 21st. Copies will be available for the public at that time. Dr. Forbes thanked the Finance Sub-committee for their assistance in preparing the 2007-08 budget.

FY 2006-07 Financial Report – Dr. Hilton presented the report dated 7/31/06; He will be working with the Director of Special Education on the budget for special education tuitions; the trend looks like we will have more students; however, the experience on health care claims is low which could benefit a balanced budget. The deficit in special needs tuition is \$63,861; however, we should be able to end the year with a balanced budget if our experience holds up on our medical. Mr. Faria asked if the School Committee can receive information as to where we were last year compared to this year (% spent vs. actual in 2005-06). Mr. Medeiros asked if we are up to date paying the bills. Dr. Hilton advised that we are about in the area of \$1 million, which is in the process of heading down now; when the deficit gets better, we will be better able to pay bills. Mr. Santos asked about making up the deficit with health claims money. Dr. Hilton thought we could cover tuitions with claims money, if claims hold over the next few months.

Awarding of Bids – Fall Athletic Supplies – Dr. Hilton presented the bid and recommended that the bid for athletic supplies be awarded to the following vendors for a total bid price of \$4,516.20:

GLS \$85.44

Grogan Marciano \$1514.59

Beacon \$ 678.77

Team Express \$1221.60

Passon's \$ 620.80

Cannon \$ 395.00

Motion: Mr. Medeiros, Seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 5-0.

Dr. Hilton requested that the School Committee award the bid for an Automated Absence Registry to Frontline Placement Technologies in the amount of \$16,965.00.

Dr. Forbes explained that this system is part of the restructuring of the district; 19 RI Districts are using it at the present time; since we have eliminated positions, this system will provide a more modernized way of doing business. The employee absence registry and substitute placement service is an efficient and less costly way to manage substitutes, get more diverse subs, and enables us to participate in their substitute pool. Dr. Forbes related that we can keep better track of our employees and the system will help streamline the process, make it more efficient, and cost effective.

Mrs. Morris would like a demo first before paying for this; she asked about bearing the cost of sending people to be trained or paying the company to come here for training employees. Dr. Forbes said she met with company representatives and received a reference from

Bristol Warren who has been using the system for about three years. The company offered to come out to speak about it on Tuesday morning. Dr. Forbes said she was pleased with the presentation and that the Superintendent is authorized to manage the district. We have been looking at it and have put the bid together in light of the fact that the School Committee agreed at a previous meeting to move forward with employee lay off, which results in the need to have this system to effectively run the schools this year; there is timeliness and appropriateness for this system.

Mrs. Morris questioned that this item is not in the budget. Dr. Hilton reported that \$3000 is needed to start it up now. Mr. Faria asked if there would be any other equipment purchases necessary and if there had been input from other users. Discussion regarding employees who will be trained who will in turn, need to train the principals. The cost of training is about \$4000 for two people. Dr. Forbes explained that the training is less expensive if we send people there. Mr. Faria was concerned about the funds. Mrs. Morris thought we should wait until we have the money in the budget before voting on this. Dr. Forbes advised that we have the training money now, as this is part of the restructuring of the district with elimination of positions. Dr. Forbes listed the rationale for the implementation. Dr. Hilton commented that the salaries of laid off staff should more than offset the cost. Mr. Medeiros asked about a monthly fee. A motion was made by Mr. Faria to support the recommendation of the Superintendent, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Roll Call vote: Mr. Faria,

aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mrs. Morris, nay. Vote 4-1. Mrs. Morris voted nay because of the money needed for training and no demo.

Personnel Recommendations – Diane Rodericks presented the following personnel items:

APPOINTMENTS

Shannon Kee Teacher, Special Ed-Resource – MMS

Motion: Lovett/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0.

RETIREMENT

Richard Pimental Night Foreman, EPHS

Effective December 14, 2007

Motion: Medeiros/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0. (Mrs. Morris with regret)

RESIGNATIONS

Michael Solitro Coach, Girls' Soccer – RMS

Lisa Massey Education Specialist(Has been on leave)

Henry McCormick Custodian

Effective July 27, 2007

Motion: Lovett/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0.

RECALLS

Julieta Borja-Penha Secretary, Elementary School

Joan Henderson Secretary, Elementary School

Jordana Croke Secretary, Elementary School

**Arlene Boyd Secretary, Special Services
(Temporary to December 31, 2007)**

**Maryanne O'Rourke Secretary, Business Office (Temporary to
September 30, 2007)**

**Donna DelleFemine Secretary, Transportation
(Temporary to September 30, 2007)**

Motion: Medeiros/Second: Lovett. Vote 5-0.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE (Maternity)

**Stacy Simmons Math Teacher, MMS
Approximately September 21, 2007**

Motion: Lovett/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

APPOINTMENT

**Robert Duarte Assistant Athletic Director
(Temporary to 10/31/07)**

Motion: Medeiros/Second: Lovett. Vote 5-0.

PERSONAL LEAVE

**Marc Marcel Education Specialist
2007-2008 School Year**

Motion: Lovett/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE (Maternity)

**Gina Loiselle Physical Education Teacher, MMS
Approximately, 9/5/07**

Motion: Lovett/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0.

RESIGNATION

**Carole Melucci Education Specialist (On Leave)
Effective immediately**

Motion: Lovett/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Discussion: Mr. Santos asked about recalls of secretaries as related to lay-offs at a previous meeting. Dr. Forbes explained that open positions need to be filled. Also, discussion on the temporary

athletic director position. Dr. Forbes explained that this position needed to be filled on a temporary basis; she spoke to the auditor and they felt it could be approved on a temporary basis. Mrs. Morris commented that the Athletic office is very busy and the assistant position is justified.

Facilities Update – Joseph Tavares, Director of Buildings and Grounds reported that most of the schools have been cleaned; however, five schools are still being worked on. At the high school, the boilers are in place and piping will begin shortly. New main grates and piping were installed in the pool; acid wash is complete, grouting was completed today by our men to save money and refilling of the pool will begin tomorrow. The student and teacher parking lots have been re-striped by the city highway department. The City highway department has removed an overgrowth of weeds from the parking lot of the Career School, creating additional parking space. The highway department assisted in several projects at Silver Spring School, which included tearing down a wall, re-sloping the land and repaving the dumpster area. At Martin Middle School, the gym floors are being refinished. Mr. Tavares thanked Mr. Peter Barilla, the former Director, for his assistance with the transition and commented that the team-cleaning approach under the leadership of Mr. Barilla, worked well and the majority of custodians were in favor of it. He thanked all for a great job in getting the work accomplished. Mr. Tavares was advised today by the water department that the High School meter will need to be replaced; the cost of the meter is

approximately \$12-15,000; however the city agreed to provide the meter, but we will need to have it installed. He will meet with the contractor this week and will advise regarding the cost. He thanked the city for their help all summer with various projects.

Dr. Forbes reminded the School Committee that a tour of school buildings has been scheduled for August 29, 2007 beginning at 8:30AM. In response to a request from Mr. Santos, Mr. Tavares biggest concerns involve completion of the heating system at the high school and completion of building cleaning due to reduction of staff.

Requests for Home Schooling – Mrs. Sharon Waterman presented the requests and recommended approval; all have met the requirements of state law. A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros, seconded by Mr. Santos. Vote 5-0.

RIDE School Support System Report – Mrs. Waterman thanked Dr. Forbes, staff, and the Local Parent Advisory Committee for their assistance with this project. She explained that every system is visited once every five years and the process requires a lot of work and organization. The purpose of the School Support System (SSS) is to provide a means of accountability for delivery of programs and services for students with exceptionalities. The School Support System model is designed to promote the involvement of the whole school district, general educators as well as special educators and

parents and is designed to learn if the district meets regulations and what effects programs and services have on student outcomes. The SSS develops a school support plan for training and technical assistance. Mrs. Waterman highlighted the strengths of the special education department and the areas recommended for improvement. The complete report may be requested from the Office of Special Services.

Dr. Forbes reported that as part of a RIDE requirement for a new accounting system, we were able to secure a grant for a pilot program (\$150,000) to participate in uniform chart of accounts. Dr. Hilton asked to speak regarding this grant opportunity, which will provide for in-service in June. A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to approve, seconded by Mr. Faria. Discussion regarding the explanation of codes, and if similar programs are in place elsewhere. Vote 5-0.

Report of Sub-Committees

Finance Sub-Committee - Dr. Forbes asked for feedback from the School Committee regarding the budget formats and asked for their preference. Mr. Faria said he liked the school based budget and hopes the School Committee will go along with it. Dr. Forbes will have the budget ready by the August 21st meeting in the new format. Mr. Medeiros asked for the budget to go on line. Dr. Forbes will make the budget available on the website after it is presented to the School

Committee on August 21st.

Mr. Faria advised that the Finance Sub-Committee continues to meet and look over the budget; they are looking for ideas from the community. Dr. Forbes announced that she would seek first passage of the budget when it is presented on 8/21 and a meeting has been scheduled for August 28th for second passage.

Unfinished Business – None

New Business - None

Payment of Bills

Local Operating Bill List:

Warrant #000751 8/01/07 \$1,612,467.62

Motion: Faria/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Warrant #000000 7/05/07 \$2,510,420.19

Motion: Faria/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Federal Bill List:

Warrant #000743 6/18/07 \$ 574,464.59

Motion: Medeiros/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0.

Warrant #000749 7/25/07 \$ 740,575.20

Motion: Faria/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Warrant #000752 8/01/07 \$ 45,323.00

Motion: Faria/Second: Mederios. Vote 5-0.

Question and Answer Period

Mrs. Cruz addressed the School Committee regarding a problem with children being placed in schools out of the district they reside in and the impact such placements have on family involvement and the pain it causes parents having children in two different schools.

Dr. Forbes explained that the School Department depends on the resources provided by the city and sometimes has to transfer students to schools outside their neighborhood schools due to lack of space. This has been a practice for quite some time and given the 2007-08 school budget; Dr. Forbes cannot recommend opening another section of Kindergarten at this time as there are only three children on a waiting list. Dr. Forbes recommended that Mrs. Cruz contact Mr. Rodericks, Director of Attendance and Registration regarding her questions on the criteria for entering first grade. A request from Mrs. Cruz to receive information on names of other students entering Kindergarten cannot be honored by the School Department due to confidentiality laws.

A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to adjourn at 9:35PM, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Eileen Lovett, Clerk of the School Committee